

PROSTHETIC SPINAL DISC NUCLEUS WITH ELEVATED SWELLING RATE

Abstract of the Disclosure

A method of manufacturing a prosthetic spinal disc nucleus. The including forming a
5 hydrogel core from a hydrogel material in a natural state. The hydrogel material in the natural
state is characterized by a natural swelling rate. The hydrogel is treated in an alkaline solution
having a pH of at least about 8. This treatment transitions the hydrogel core from the natural
state to a treated state characterized by an elevated swelling rate. The elevated swelling rate is
greater than the natural swelling rate. The resultant, treated hydrogel core forms at least a portion
10 of a prosthetic spinal disc nucleus that is otherwise sized for insertion into a spinal disc nucleus
cavity. In one particular embodiment, the hydrogel core is inserted into a constraining jacket.
Another aspect of the present invention relates to a prosthetic spinal disc nucleus including a
hydrogel core having the elevated swelling rate.